

Appl. No. 10,089,598
Amendment Dated January 8, 2004
Reply to Office Action of October 9, 2003

Attorney Docket No. 81833.0036
Customer No. 26021

REMARKS:

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Claims 1 and 19 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 7, 11-13, 20, and 22-24 are amended. New claims 36-46 are added. Claims 2-18 and 20-46 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Applicant believes the foregoing amendments comply with requirements of form and thus may be admitted under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a). Alternatively, if these amendments are deemed to touch the merits, admission is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b). In this connection, these amendments were not earlier presented because they are in response to the matters pointed out for the first time in the Final Office Action.

Lastly, admission is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a) as presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103:

Claims 1, 11-15, 17-19, and 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaziura et al. in view of Ackley, Sr. et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,393,973. This rejection is moot with respect to claims 1 and 19 due to the cancellation of these claims. The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection as to claims 11-15, 17, 18, and 22-24.

Claims 11-15, 17, and 18 now depend from amended claim 7, which was rewritten in independent form. The Office states that claim 7 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Since claims 11-15, 17, and 18 now depend from claim 7, they are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 7. Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of claims 11-15, 17, and 18 is thus respectfully requested.

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Claims 22-24 now depend from amended claim 20, which was rewritten in independent form. The Office states that claim 20 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Since claims 22-24 now depend from claim 20, they are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 20. Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of claims 22-24 is thus respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

The Office objected to claims 7-10, 20, and 21 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but states that these claims "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." In response, Applicant rewrote claims 7 and 20 in the manner suggested by the Office. Withdrawal of this objection and allowance of claims 7 and 20 is thus respectfully requested.

Claims 8-10 depend from claim 7 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as amended claim 7. Withdrawal of this objection and allowance of claims 8-10 is respectfully requested.

Claim 21 depends from claim 20 and is patentable for at least the same reasons as amended claim 20. Withdrawal of this objection and allowance of claim 21 is respectfully requested.

Claims 6, 16, and 25-35 are allowed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los

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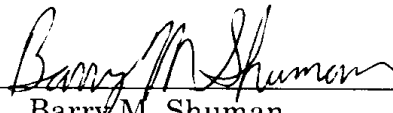
Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6810 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

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Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

Date: January 8, 2004

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